THE

KOREA REVIEW

FEBRUARY 1904.

The Russo-Japanese War.

The vexed question has at last been settled and war has begun. But this brings up another question. How will it end? The impatient onlooker will attempt to sum up the chances on one side and on the other and will be eager to catch at every event however insignificant which gives any indication of the actual ability of either of the belligerents. It is claimed by some that Japan is not what she was in 1894 and the counter claim is made that Russia is not what she was in the days of the Crimean war. The letter of each of these statements may be taken for granted but the inference that neither power is as strong as she once was must be put to the test before it can be accepted.

The Causes. In 1895 Japan, by virtue of her victory over China took possession of the Liao-tung peninsula. This was a severe blow to the settled policy of Russia who, as has been abundantly proved since, intended to become mistress of the whole of Manchuria. On the plea of preserving the integrity of China, Russia succeeded in securing the cooperation of France and Germany, whereby Japan was forced to give up the conquered territory for a money consideration. Unfortunately British sympathies were largely with the Chinese in that war and they looked with more or less complaisancy upon the forced retrocession of the Liao-tung peninsula. Had the British known what they know now

this never would have happened except at the price of war. Japan in actual possession could have beaten back the Russian forces on land while the Japanese and British fleets combined would have prevented any danger from France and Germany.

From the moment Japan left Manchuria, Russia began to do the very thing which she had urged as the cause for the dislodgment of the victorious troops of the Mikado. This in itself was a direct insult to Japan and an insult as well to France and Germany, unless they were privy to the ulterior motives of Russia, and this, at least in the case of Germany, we cannot believe.

This we may confidently claim to be the cause of the present war; but not merely because it wounded the vanity of the Japanese. It surely did that, but the continued encroachments of Russia upon the sovereignty of China also menaced the commercial success of the Japanese. The Russians attacked them at two vital points, their national honor and their national prosperity. But in addition to this the subjects of the Czar at the capital of Korea began to make use of the most corrupt officials at court and through them opposed Japanese commerce at every possible point, encouraged the continuation of a debased coinage which was destroying Japanese trade, caused the Korean Government to stultify itself by forbidding the use of the Japanese bank notes and then making an abject apology therefor, and in every possible way thwarted the legitimate operations of the Japanese. Furthermore they made continual demands for exclusive rights in different Korean ports and by cajolery and intimidation made a secret agreement whereby Russia encroached upon Korean sovereignty in the harbor of Yongampo. The evident policy of Russia was to supplant Japan in Korea, and no reasonable person can fail to see that it was their ultimate plan to add Korea to the map of Russia. To say, therefore, that Japan struck the first blow in this war is the same as saying that a man is the aggressor because he knocks up the hand of a burglar who is reaching for his throat. The cause of this war, therefore, was the necessity laid upon Japan to safe-

guard her own legitimate interests and her life itself by checking the encroachments of Russia upon Chinese and Korean territory. This at least is what we deem to be its purpose.

The Method. Before submitting her cause to the arbitrament of the sword Japan has exerted every effort to make Russia define her intentions in the Far East. As the latter had leased Manchuria from China and then, upon the expiration of the extreme limit set by herself, had refused to execute either the letter or the spirit of her solemn engagements it became necessary not only for Japan but for other powers as well that Russia should be nailed down to some definite proposition, and set a limit to her ambition. For months Japan, with a patience which elicited the admiration of the world, kept plying Russia with pertinent questions until at last it was revealed that Russia proposed to deal with Manchuria as she wished and would consult no one but China about it. In the second place she would concede Japanese interests in southern Korea only and then only as Japan would engage not to act in that sphere as Russia is acting in Manchuria. All this time the Japanese people had been clamoring for war; they wanted to get at the throat of their manifest foe, but the Government in a masterly way held them in check, kept its own secrets so inviolable as to astonish the most astute diplomatists of the day, and at last when the proper moment arrived it declared itself for war without having weakened the enthusiasm of the people by an ounce weight and at the same time without giving the outside grumblers the least opportunity to hint that she had given way to popular importunity. Nothing could be saner or less sensational than her action throughout.

At last Japan communicated to Russia her irreducible minimum and one would think that even the blind could see that war was certain to follow, and follow soon. It was the one subject of conversation throughout the Far East. It is safe to say that everybody except the Russians felt sure that the time had come, but even then, if there is any truth in direct evidence, the great majority

of Russians laughed the matter aside as impossible. The Japanese had shown such moderation and self-control that the Russians had apparently counted it for hesitation; so that when the moment came for action and Japan sprang upon her like a tigress robbed of her whelps Russia cried loudly that she had not been notified. She must be formally notified, she must be given twenty-four hours in which to get under cover! What did they suppose the Foreign Office had handed back to Baron Rosen his credentials for? This took place at least as early as the morning of the seventh. Notice had already been given to the powers that negotiations had been broken off. Diplomatic relations were broken off on Saturday the sixth and on that same evening the Japanese Minister left St. Petersburg. This was over forty hours before the Japanese committed any hostile act against Russia. Even had the Japanese refused to send notification of this to the Russian Minister in Seoul it could have been sent straight to Port Arthur from St. Petersburg and the boats lying in Chemulpo harbor could have been notified in time to retire from their dangerous position. The Russian complaint that the Japanese made no formal declaration of war and sent no notification falls to the ground. In these days, as everyone knows, the formal withdrawal of a minister is tantamount to a declaration of war. The hour Minister Kurino left St Petersburg the two powers were virtually at war with each other. If the Russian authorities thought there was no hurry about warning their isolated warships it was their own lookout and they have no cause to complain because their dilatoriness cost them two war vessels, one of which was among their fastest cruisers. But under any circumstances, granting, for the sake of argument, that Japan acted with undue promptness, what business has Russia to try to hold Japan to the letter of the law when she herself has broken every canon of international justice in her dealings with Manchuria? The proverb that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones applies with peculiar force at this point; and while we do not believe that Japan overstep-

ped the rules of international propriety by her promptness we are free to confess that there would have been some excuse if she had.

The Battle of Chemulpo.

It was on the sixth and seventh that reports circulated in Seoul that the Japanese were landing large bodies of troops at Kunsan or Asan or both. These rumors turned out to be false, but beneath them was the fact that a fleet was approaching Chemulpo. The question has been insistently asked why the Russian Minister did not inform the commanders of these Russian vessels and see to it that they were clear of the harbor before these rumors were realized. The answer as given is that the Russian Minister had no control over these boats. They had their orders to remain in Chemulpo and there they must stay. One would think that there would be at least enough *rapport* between the civil and military (or naval) authorities to use the one in forwarding the interests of the other.

Even yet the Russians did not appreciate the seriousness of the situation, but they decided that it was time to send notice to their authorities in Port Arthur of what was rumored at Chemulpo. So the small gunboat *Koryetz* made ready to move out. Her captain, Belaieff proposed to the Russian Consul that the Russian steamship *Sungari*, which was in port, should go with the *Koryetz* and thus enjoy her protection, but the agent of the company which owned the steamship strongly objected to her leaving the neutral port at such a time. He evidently realized in part the acuteness of the situation. So the *Sungari* remained at her anchorage and the *Koryetz* steamed out of port at two o'clock in the afternoon. Now, the harbor of Chemulpo is a somewhat peculiar one, for in one sense it is land-locked and in another it is not. It is formed by islands between which there are many openings to the open sea, but most of these are so shallow that ships of medium draught do not dare attempt them. There is but one recognized entrance and that is from the southwest, or between that and the south. This entrance is several miles wide and in the center of it lies Round Island. When the *Koryetz*

arrived at the exit of the harbor she suddenly found herself surrounded by torpedo-boats. The only witnesses of what occurred at this point are the Japanese and the Russians and we can only give their accounts. The Russians say that the Japanese launched four torpedoes at the *Koryetz*, none of which took effect. One man affirms that a torpedo came straight toward the *Koryetz* and when within ten feet of her side sank. Another statement is that a shot was fired on board the Koryetz but it was a mere accident! The Japanese claim that the *Koryetz* fired first. If we try to weigh the probabilities it seems impossible that the torpedoes of the Japanese should have missed the *Koryetz*, if the torpedo-boats were as near as the Russians claim. On the other hand the admission on the part of a single Russian that the first gun was fired on the *Koryetz*, even though by accident, is rather damaging, for it is more than singular that an accident should have happened at that precise time. As the cow-boy said, "Accidents don't happen in the West —leastways not with guns."

In any case it makes little difference who began the firing. The Japanese had already seized the Russian steamer *Mukden* in the harbor of Fusan and the war had begun. The Japanese doubtless held with Polonius, as quoted by Terrence Mulvaney, that if it is necessary to fight it is well to hit the enemy "fur-rst and frequint." The *Koryetz* turned back to her anchorage and the Russians became aware of the extreme precariousness of their position. Whatever attitude one may take toward the general situation it is impossible not to extend a large degree of sympathy to these Russians personally. Through no fault of their own they were trapped in the harbor and found too late that they must engage in a hopeless fight in order to uphold the honor of the Russian flag. But even yet it was not sure that the neutrality of the port would be ignored by the Japanese. Lying at anchor among neutral vessels in a neutral harbor, there was more or less reason to believe that they were safe for the time being.

About four o'clock in the afternoon of February eighth, which fell on Monday, three Japanese transports

entered Chemulpo harbor from the south, convoyed by cruisers and torpedo-boats. They seemingly took no notice of the two Russian boats lying at anchor and were evidently sure that the Russians would not fire upon the transports. It would be interesting to know whether the Japanese were relying upon the declared neutrality of the port in thus venturing or whether they felt sure that their own superior strength would keep the Russians still, or whether, again, they were certain that the Russians had orders not to fire the first gun. But it is bootless to ask questions that can never be answered. Here is where the assailant has the advantage. He can choose the time and method of his attack. We may surmise that had the Russians divined the intentions of the Japanese and had foreseen the outcome they would have acted differently, but divination of Japanese intentions does not seem to be Russia's strong point.

As soon as the Japanese came to anchor preparations were made for the immediate landing of the troops, and the cruisers and torpedo-boats that had convoyed them in, left the port and joined the fleet outside. This fleet consisted of six cruisers and several torpedo-boats. The *Asama* and the *Chiyoda* were the most powerful of the cruisers, the former being nearly half as large again as the *Variak*.

Night came on, and throughout its long hours the Japanese troops, by the light of huge fires burning on the jetty, were landed and marched up into the town. When morning came everyone was in a state of expectancy. If there was a Japanese fleet outside they doubtless had other work on hand than simply watching two Russian boats. Nor could they leave them behind, for one of them was Russia's fastest cruiser and might steam out of the harbor at any time and destroy Japanese transports. Knowing, as we do now, that an immediate attack on Port Arthur had been decided upon we see it was unpossible to leave these Russian boats in the rear. Japan had never recognized the neutrality of Korea, for she knew that the declaration was merely a Russian move to embarrass her, and

she never hesitated a moment to break the thin shell of pretense.

About ten o'clock a sealed letter was handed to Captain Rudnieff of the *Variak*. It was from the Japanese Admiral and had been sent through the Russian Consulate. It was delivered on board the *Variak* by the hand of Mr. N. Krell, a Russian resident of the port. This letter informed the Russian commander that unless both Russian boats should leave the anchorage and steam out of the bay before twelve o'clock the Japanese would come in at four o'clock and attack them where they lay. Captain Rudnieff immediately communicated the startling intelligence to Captain Belaieff of the *Koryetz* and to the commanders of the British, American, French and Italian war-vessels. We are informed that a conference of the various commanders took place and that the Russians were advised to lie where they were. The British commander was deputed to confer with the Japanese. This was done by signal and it is said a protest was more against the proposed violation of neutrality of the port and that the neutral boats refused to shift their anchorage. But all complications of this nature were avoided by the determination of the Russians to accept the challenge. This they deemed to be due their flag. It is not improbable that they now foresaw that the neutrality of the port would not avail them against the enemy. By remaining at anchor they could only succeed in involving France, Italy, Great Britain and the United States and there would be sure to be those who would charge the Russians with cowardice. If this was to begin the war it must at least prove the dauntless courage of the servants of the Czar. So the commander of the *Variak* ordered the decks cleared for action. It has been stated that he would have preferred to have the *Koryetz* stay at her anchorage, for by a quick dash it was just possible that the swift *Variak* alone might be able to evade the Japanese and run the gauntlet successfully. But the commander of the *Koryetz* refused to listen to any such proposition. If the only honor to be gotten out of the affair was by a

desperate attack he was not going to forego his share of it. He would go out and sink with the *Variak*. So the *Koryetz* also cleared for action. It was done in such haste that all moveables that were unnecessary were thrown overboard, a topmast that would not come down in the usual manner was hewn down with an axe and by half past eleven the two vessels were ready to go out to their doom. It was an almost hopeless task—an entirely hopeless one unless the Japanese should change thier minds or should make some grave mistake, and neither of these things was at all probable. The Russians were going to certain destruction. Some call it rashness, not bravery, but they say not well. The boats were doomed in any case and it was the duty of their officers and crews to go forth and in dying inflict what injury they could upon the enemy. To go into battle with chances equal is the act of a brave man, but to walk into the jaws of death with nothing but defeat in prospect is the act of a hero, and the Japanese would be the last to detract from the noble record that the Russians made. Time has not yet lent its glamor to this event, we are two near it to see it in proper proportions, but if the six hundred heroes of Balaclava, veterans of many a fight, gained undying honor for the desperate charge they made how shall not the future crown these men who, having never been in action before, made such a gallant dash at the foe? Nor shall we wonder that when they weighed anchor and turned their prows toward the overwhelming power of the enemy a cheer was torn from the very throats of the men on board the neutral ships, whether those men sympathized with Japanese or Russian. And herein lies the intrinsic damnableness of war, that causes which will not bear the search-light of abstract justice can marshall to their support the noblest qualities of which men are capable.

It was a cloudless but hazy day and from the anchorage the Japanese fleet was all but invisible, for it lay at least eight miles out in the entrance of the harbor and partly concealed by Round Island which splits the offing into two channels. The two boats made straight for the

more easterly of the channels, their course being a very little west of south. When they had proceeded about half the distance from the anchorage to the enemy's fleet the latter threw a shot across the bows of each of the Russian boats as a command to stop and surrender, but the Russians took no notice of it. The only chance the Russians had to inflict any damage was to reduce the firing range as much as possible for the *Variak*'s guns were only six inches and four-tenths in caliber and at long range they would have been useless. This was at five minutes before noon. The Japanese fleet was not deployed in a line facing the approaching boats and it was apparent that they did not intend to bring their whole force to bear upon the Russians simultaneously. We are informed that only two of the Japanese vessels, the *Asama* and the *Chiyoda*, did the work. It was not long after the warning shots had been fired that the Japanese let loose and the roar that went up from those terrible machines of destruction tore the quiet of the windless bay to tatters and made the houses of the town tremble where they stood. It beat against the bare hills like the hammer of Thor and startled the denizens of distant Seoul with its muffled thunder. As the *Variak* advanced she swerved to the eastward and gave the Japanese her starboard broadside. All about her the sea was lashed into foam by striking shot and almost from the beginning of the fight her steering-gear was shot away so that she had to depend on her engines alone for steering. It became evident to her commander that the passage was impossible. He had pushed eastward until there was imminent danger of running aground. So he turned again toward the west and came around in a curve which brought the *Variak* much nearer to the Japanese. It was at this time that the deadly work was done upon her. Ten of her twelve gun-captains were shot away. A shell struck her fo'castle, passed between the arm and body of a gunner who had his hand upon his hip and, bursting, killed every other man on the fo'castle. Both bridges were destroyed by bursting shell and the Captain was seriously wounded in the left arm. The watchers on shore and on the shipping in the

harbor saw flames bursting out from her quarter-deck and one witness plainly saw shells drop just beside her and burst beneath the water line. It was these shots that did the real damage, for when, after three quarters of an hour of steady fighting, she turned her prow back toward the anchorage it was seen that she had a heavy list to port which could have been caused only by serious damage below the water-line. As the two boats came slowly back to port, the *Variak* so crippled by the destruction of one of her engines that she could make only ten knots an hour, the Japanese boats followed, pouring in a galling fire, until the Russians had almost reached the anchorage. Then the pursuers drew back and the battle was over. The *Koryetz* was intact. The Japanese had reserved all their fire for the larger vessel. The *Variak* was useless as a fighting machine, for her heavy list to port would probably have made it impossible to train the guns on the enemy, but all knew that the end had not yet come. The Russians had neither sunk nor surrendered. The threat of the Japanese to come in at four o'clock was still active. As soon as the *Variak* dropped anchor the British sent off four hospital boats to her with a surgeon and a nurse. Other vessels also sent offers of aid. But it was found that the Russians had decided to lie at anchor and fight to the bitter end and at the last moment blow up their vessels with all on board. What else was there for them to do? They would not surrender and they could not leave their ships and go ashore only to be captured by the enemy. They would play out the tragedy to a finish and go down fighting. Upon learning of this determination the commanders of the various neutral vessels held another conference at which it was decided that the Russians had done all that was necessary to vindicate the honor of their flag and that, as it was a neutral port, the survivors should be invited to seek asylum on the neutral vessels. The invitation was accepted and the sixty-four wounded on board the *Variak* were at once transferred to the British cruiser *Talbot* and the French cruiser *Pascal*. As the commanders of the neutral vessels knew that the *Variak* and *Koryetz* were to be sunk by the Russians

they paid no particular attention to the reiterated statement of the Japanese that they would enter the harbor at four and finish the work already begun. The passengers, crew and mails on board the steamship *Sungari* had already been transferred to the *Pascal* and an attempt had been made to scuttle her but she was filling very slowly indeed. It was about half-past three in the afternoon that the officers and crew of the *Koryetz* went over the side and went to the *Pascal*. A train had been laid by which she would be blown up and it is supposed that she was entirely abandoned, but some spectators assert that they saw several men on the forward deck an instant before the explosion took place.

It was generally known throughout the town that the *Koryetz* would be blown up before four o'clock and everyone sought some point of vantage from which to witness the spectacle. Scores of people went out to the little island on which the light-house stands, for this was nearest to the doomed ship. It was thirty-seven minutes past three when the waiting multitude saw two blinding flashes of light one following the other in quick succession. A terrific report followed which dwarfed the roar of cannon to a whisper and shook every house in the town as if it had been struck by a solid rock. The window-fastenings of one house at least were torn off, so great was the concussion. An enormous cloud of smoke and debris shot toward the sky and at the same time enveloped the spot where the vessel had lain. A moment later there began a veritable shower of splintered wood, torn and twisted railing, books, clothes, rope, utensils and a hundred other belongings of the ship. The cloud of smoke expanded in the upper air and blotted out the sun like an eclipse. The startled gulls flew hither and thither as if dazed by this unheard of phenomenon and men instinctively raised their hands to protect themselves from the falling debris, pieces of which were drifted by the upper currents of air for a distance of three miles landward where they fell by the hundreds in peoples' yards.

When the smoke was dissipated it was discovered that the *Koryetz* had sunk, only her funnel and some torn rigging appearing above the surface, if we except her forward steel deck which the force of the explosion had bent up from the prow so that the point of it, like the share of a huge plow, stood several feet out of water. The surface of the bay all about the spot was covered thickly with smoking debris and several of the ship's boats were floating about intact upon the water.

The Russians were intending to blow up the *Variak* as well, but the magnitude of the explosion on board the *Koryetz* led the commanders to suggest that the *Variak* be allowed to sink where she lay. She was already in a sinking condition and was burning freely. It was evident that she could not become a Japanese prize, so she was simply abandoned and left to the elements. The forty-one dead could hardly have been carried on board the friendly ships, so they were, with a few exceptions, placed in a cabin together and the ship for which they had fought and died became their fitting tomb. As viewed from the deck of the United States Gunboat *Vicksburg* she was lying far over to port at an angle of nearly thirty degrees at five o'clock in the afternoon. The fires in her after part would break out and then subside while every few moments came the detonation of a cartridge which the fire had reached. Two of her four funnels were partly shot away and her deck presented a scene of wild confusion. Just before dark, when it seemed that any moment might be her last, a boat was seen putting off from the *Pascal* and manned apparently by five or six naval men. They went straight to the *Sungari* and remained on board for perhaps fifteen minutes. Then they pushed off but they had not left her side by more than a half dozen lengths before a tongue of flame appeared from the region of her cabin and it was quite apparent that she had been deliberately fired. But soon all eyes were again centered on the *Variak*. She was preparing for the final plunge. Slowly she dipped, further and

further to port—now her rail is under water—an excited murmur arises from the men who crowd the side of the *Vicksburg* to see her go. And now she begins visibly to lie over on her side; slowly and majestically she turns until at last her funnels touch the water and with a great surging, choking groan she goes to her resting place like some mighty leviathan that has received his death wound. As the water reaches the fires a cloud of steam goes up which, illuminated by the dying flash of fire forms her signal of farewell. It was expected that the Japanese would demand as prisoners of war the men who had been taken on board the neutral ships, but it would have been refused on the plea that the men had been rescued off sinking ships in a neutral harbor; but it was recognized that these rescued men had become noncombatants by seeking asylum, and so it was subsequently arranged that the British vessel should carry to a British port those whom she had rescued and guarantee their parole until the end of the war. The French are carrying theirs to Saigon while those on the Italian boat will be disposed of in a similar manner.

This wholly unexpected annihilation of the Russian boats naturally caused consternation among the Russians of Chemulpo and Seoul. The Russian Consulate was surrounded by Japanese troops and the Consul was held practically a prisoner. The Japanese Minister in Seoul suggested to the Russian Minister through the French Legation the advisability of his removing from Seoul with his nationals and every facility was given him for doing this with expedition and with comfort. A few days later all the Russians were taken by special train to Chemulpo and there, being joined by the Russian subjects in Chemulpo, they all went on board the Pascal. This vessel must have been crowded, for it is said that when she sailed she had on board six hundred Russians, both civilians and military men.

Twenty-four of the most desperately wounded men on board the neutral ships were sent ashore and placed in the Provisional Red Cross Hospital. For this purpose the English Church Mission kindly put at the disposal of

the Japanese their hospital at Chemulpo. Several of these wounded men were suffering from gangrene when they came off the Pascal but with the most sedulous care the Japanese physicians and nurses pulled them through.

The Ajun.

The *ajŭn* is one of the most important social and governmental factors in Korea. He is the man who brings the administration of the Government into direct contact with the populace, the individual, the political unit. This word is of pure Korean origin and is not a Chinese importation. It is true that the Chinese characters used to express the word are 衙前 which mean "before the yamen" and are in some sense descriptive of this class of men, but this is only a transliteration of the word. The Koreans were fortunate enough to strike two characters pronounced *a* and *jŭn* which at the same time had meanings in Chinese which, put together, are partially descriptive of the office. There is no real Chinese word *ajŭn*. The idea is always expressed in China by the character 吏 *yi*. The fact that this pure Korean word has survived while almost every other official term has been borrowed from the Chinese argues that this was the term used in Korea before the great influx of Chinese ideas and words which took place during the days of the Tang Dynasty 627-905 A. D. Another thing that would make this more probable is that the *ajŭn* is the official who comes in close and daily contact with the common people and his name becomes a household word which could be changed only with great difficulty. The Chinese character *yi* was commonly used in official documents in the place of *ajŭn* from the year 680 A. D. or thereabout but the common word was two strongly intrenched in the habit of the people to be eradicated.

We must first determine just what the *ajŭn* is before we can discuss his duties. Some have the notion that

the word is synonymous with "yamen runner" but this is an error. Every prefect in the land is an *ajŭn*. Whenever a prefect refers to himself in an official note he calls himself a 吏 or *ajŭn*. The term Chang-yi or "Chief Ajŭn" is a common one for a prefect among the common people in the country. The word *sa* 使 is simply the word for *ajŭn* with the radical for man placed before it. This is used in the words Kam-sa, "governor" and Sa-sin, "Envoy." The term *ajŭn* itself means an agent or factor and the prefect is an agent of the King just as the *ajŭn* is the agent of the prefect. At the time when this office came into use and for many centuries thereafter society was not divided into upper and lower classes as it is now. The *yangban* sprang up in the days of Koryu 718-1392 A. D. So the *ajŭn* was at first a real officer but after the segregation of the classes the position of *ajŭn* failed to acquire the dignity of an official rank of p'yŭ-sal (or *paysil*, *pesil* or *pestle* according to various foreign pronunciation). It is therefore called "doing Government business without rank." In former times the office of prefect was to some extent hereditary and stayed for generations in some local family of high repute, but at that time there had not entered the caste spirit which was fostered later by the close imitation of the Chinese. The prefect was only a higher sort of *ajŭn*. When, therefore, the spirit of exclusiveness took hold upon the Koreans and certain men found that they could secure greater distinction by holding themselves aloof from the common people it was inevitable that they should seize the opportunity. It was the same movement that put an end to the early Roman republic, the natural human weakness for personal distinction. The line of demarcation was drawn between the prefects and the ordinary *ajŭns*, the former being enrolled in the upper class. At the same time this caste feeling tended toward a rapid centralization of power and every man who wanted a position had to seek it at the capital. This broke up the monopoly of the hereditary prefectural families and resulted in the appointment of prefects directly from the capital, men who in most cases knew nothing about the conditions prevail-

ing in the prefectures to which they were sent. It is easy to see what a demoralization this would effect. In former times each prefect was a son of the soil. His family and clan were native to the prefecture where he governed and so became hostages to his good behavior. He simply dared not oppress the people beyond a "reasonable" limit. His family's reputation was at stake as well as his own. But when the new order was established and an unknown and unconnected individual would appear upon the scene and assume the prefectural ermine there was no reason why he should be careful to protect the interests of his people. He could squeeze them to the limit of their endurance and then gracefully resign and leave for the capital or for his native place without any particular odium attaching to his family.

But there is one saving element in this new order of things. The *ajŭns* did not secure a footing in the upper class and therefore have retained much of their old hereditary status. In addition to this, their influence is increased by the fact that each prefect who comes is utterly ignorant of local conditions and usages and is forced to depend entirely upon them for his information. In fact each prefecture is a miniature of the central government. The prefect becomes as it were the king of his little state and the *ajŭns* are his ministers. So closely is this resemblance carried out that each prefect has his six ministers, namely of the interor, of finance, of ceremonies, of war, of agriculture and of law. It was through these that all prefectural business was done. It is these men who come into direct contact with the people. Besides the six leading *ajŭns* there are others under them varying in number according to the size and importance of the prefecture, but all of them are native to the soil and their families are rooted in local traditions. It is this one thing that has held the body politic together. Foreigners wonder how the Korean people have endured this form of government for so many centuries, but they judge mostly from the gruesome tales told of high

officials at the capital or of rapacious prefects. The reason of it all lies with the *ajŭns* who like anchors hold the ship of state to her moorings. We choose this figure deliberately. A ship is supposed to sail across the sea but Korea has long since been content to lie in harbor. Even this is dangerous unless the anchor holds. The *ajŭns* are this anchor and have held Korea to her moorings in spite of the tides which periodically sweep back and forth and threaten to carry her on the rocks. It will seem strange to some that anything good should be said for the *ajŭn*. The general impression is that they are a pack of wolves whose business it is to fleece the people and who lie awake nights concocting plans for their further spoliation. This idea is radically wrong. The Koreans put the matter in a nutshell when they say that a high official will escape censure for his evil acts and receive fulsome adulation for small acts of merit but that a small man's good acts are taken for granted and his smallest faults are exaggerated. So it is that the *ajŭn* is the scape-goat for everyone's sins, the safety valve which saves the boiler from bursting. It is right to pile metaphors on him since everyone uses him as a dumping-ground for their abuse. There is no manner of doubt that the *ajŭns* abuse the people frequently but if they were the fiends that they are painted the people would long since have exterminated them. They are fixtures in their various districts and having forfeited the good will and forbearance of the people there they cannot move away to "pastures new." Their families and local interests are their hostages to fortune and their normal attitude is that of a buffer between the rapacity of the prefect and the exasperation of the people. They must be friends with both if possible. The prefect wants to get as much as he can and the people want to give as little as they may. It is the *ajŭn*'s business to steer between this Scilla and Charybdis, disappoint each party as little as possible, since neither can be satisfied, and all the time uphold his own prestige with the prefect and preserve the good

will of the people. Is it any wonder that we hear only evil of the *ajŭn*?

Another mistaken idea is that the *ajŭn* is simply a yamen-runner in the sense of an official servant who with his own hand arrests people, hales them before the magistrate and inflicts punishment in person. The *ajun* is much higher in the social scale than this. He superintends the doing of these things but he does not do them with his own hand. He holds the place of an upper servant and gives more orders than he takes. That he has no special dress, no livery, also indicates his superiority to the common servant.

Another and more important consideration is found in the literary culture of the *ajŭn*. It is very uncommon to find one who is not skilled in the use of the Chinese character. He is necessarily so, for he has to do all the writing at the prefectural headquarters and he has to handle deeds, mortgages and all sorts of documents. It often happens that among the *ajŭns* will be found the best Chinese students in the prefecture. Looking at them from this side they are the clerks of the office and as such are far removed from the ordinary yamen-runner.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the *ajun* is the peculiar system called the *i-tu* which requires a word of explanation. When the Chinese language and literature were introduced into Korea in the seventh and eighth centuries it was the official class, of course, that first cultivated the new and fashionable art. At that time the *ajŭns* formed the great bulk of the official class and they became the clerks, just as in England during the middle ages it was not the highest officials but the clerks who could read and write. At that time it was found that the Chinese and Korean languages were so different that Koreans found great difficulty in reading the Chinese text, owing to the absence of verbal and nominal endings. In order to overcome this difficulty the great scholar Sŏl-ch'ong invented a system whereby these endings were interpolated in the Chinese text and reading became comparatively easy. This system he called the *i-tu* (吏讀) or "ajun's talk." This very name shows that the *ajŭns* were

the first to become familiar with the Chinese as the official language. But gradually as education spread among the upper classes and became the rule rather than the exception, the higher officials and the wealthy who had more leisure than the *ajŭns* learned to read Chinese without the aid of the *i-tu*, and the pride of letters speedily relegated this system to the clerks in the government offices. At last there came the segregation of the classes caused in large part by this very pride of letters and so the *i-tu* became the sole possession of the same official *ajŭn* class. But all this time it had become stereotyped so that by the time the present dynasty began, the language of the *ajuns*, this official language, had been left in the rear by the ordinary language of the people just as colloquial English outstripped the stereotyped language of the law and left the latter cumbered with obsolete forms or at least forms that were peculiar to itself. To this very day the *ajŭns* use this stilted official language in their records and reports and such peculiar endings as *sal-che*, *olka*, *sin-ji*, *iogo* and many others abound in them just as the words *to wit*, *escheat*, and such like terms are used in English legal documents. This *i-tu* system is the oldest literary relic of Korea and is of great value in determining the history of the Korean vernacular.

The number of *ajŭns* in any district depends upon the size and wealth of the community. There are some prefectures that have only six *ajŭns*, enough to represent the six departments already mentioned. In others there will be ten, twenty, fifty or even a hundred *ajŭns*. However many there may be, they form a class by themselves, a sort of little guild in each prefecture. It is very seldom that this guild in any place contains a member who was not born and brought up in that same district. The position is an hereditary one and any *ajŭn*'s son may follow in his father's footsteps if he will. Of course they may elect to become farmers or merchants or join some other craft but the ranks of the *ajŭns* are recruited almost wholly from their own number. As a rule they are looked up to by the people of their respective communities as being almost equivalent to the veritable *yangban* or gentleman. This

is because of their literary attainments as well as their political position. It is the *ajŭns* who influence most largely the popular taste and feeling. They come into such close contact with the people that the latter copy after them. As a rule the way to reach the people is through the *ajŭn*. He holds in his hands the greatest possibilities for good or for evil. If he is good it will be practically impossible for an evil prefect to oppress the people. If he is bad it will be almost equally difficult for a good prefect to govern well. Without doubt the *ajŭn* is the most important factor in practical government in Korea. In almost every case he can keep the prefect informed or misinformed and thus can influence the prefectural commands, and when commands have been issued it is he who has the execution of the orders. The saving clause in the whole system is the fact that the *ajŭn* is a fixture in the community and he stakes not only the reputation and welfare of himself but also that of his family. In other words he gives hostages to the public and if ever the time comes when he oversteps the limits of the people's endurance he is sure to see his family suffer with him.

The temptations of the *ajŭns* are very great. The whole revenue of the district passes through their hands. In a sense they have to work against both the people and the prefect. The latter wants all that he can get and watches the *ajŭns* closely for it and the *ajŭns* are ever trying to make the people give, up to the limit of their ability. Much is said about the way the *ajŭns* squeeze the people and this is doubtless true but the people are forever trying to evade their taxes and use every subterfuge to jump their revenue bills. It is a case of diamond cut diamond and the people realize it as well as the *ajun*. The qualities necessary to become a successful *ajun* make a long and formidable list. He must be tactful in the "management" of the prefect; exact in his accounts; firm yet gentle with the people; resourceful in emergencies; masterful in crises; quick to turn to his advantage every event and in fact he must have all the qualities of the successful politician. One of his most brilliant attainments is

the ability to make excuses. If the people blame him for extortion he spreads out expostulatory hands and says that the prefect orders it and he has no option. If the prefect blames him for shortage in revenue returns he bows low and asserts upon his honor that the people have been squeezed dry, and can endure no more.

Editorial Comment.

Political and international situations are like leaves on the trees in that no two of them are alike. Each one must be separately interpreted in the light of large and general laws, and each one helps to define the application of these laws. The recent fight at Chemulpo will do not a little to define the bearing and application of the laws which govern the action of belligerents in a neutral port. We are not competent to pass upon these delicate questions but we note the factors in the problem. The first is as to the actual neutrality of Korea. Neutrality does not consist simply in the declaration of neutrality. Many a man declares himself to be well when he is ill or *vice versa*. But even if a government is not neutral at heart it is legally neutral if it commits no acts that give the lie to its declaration. And no power has the right to deny to the said government the benefits and immunities of neutrality so long as that government preserves the spirit as well as the letter of its declaration.

At the time when the Korean Government published its declaration of neutrality the officials who guided the imperial action were notoriously pro-Russian in their sympathies. It is of no consequence now what their names are, but of the fact there can be no doubt. It is generally understood that the Foreign Office, at the time, was shorn of all real power and was only the mouthpiece through which these friends of Russia spoke, in order to make their pronouncements official. The Japanese were well aware that this declaration of neutrality was only a Russian move to embarrass Japan and put her in the wrong before the world in case she should find

it necessary to land troops on the peninsula. It was already known that two of these pro-Russian officials had strongly urged that Russia be asked for troops to protect the palace in Seoul and the Japanese were on the lookout for evidences of bad faith in the matter of declared neutrality. When, therefore, the ubiquitous Japanese picked up a boat in the Yellow Sea and found on it a Korean carrying a letter to Port Arthur asking for Russian troops and discovered that this letter, while unofficial in form, had come from the very men who had caused the promulgation of the declaration of neutrality, it became clear that while the strict letter of the law had not been broken the spirit of neutrality was non-existent. This letter was seized about the ninth of February and must therefore have been written before Japan had done anything to impair the neutrality of the Korean Government. We do not pretend to pass judgment upon this phase of the question. That must be left to the international lawyers. We merely state some of the facts which will enter into the problem.

Another question is in regard to the neutrality of the port of Chemulpo. If Korean neutrality was genuine the action of Japan in forcing the Russian vessels out could be made a *casus belli* on the part of Korea, but as Korea has no power to prosecute such a war the Japanese were physically safe in ignoring the neutrality of the port. As between Russia and Japan the harbor of Chemulpo was the same as the high sea. Korea was the only power that could by international right shoot a gun in the defence of its neutrality. Others might protest, as they did, but they could go no further. It is the duty of neutral powers to say to belligerents in their ports "You shall not fight in my ports, and you shall not leave the harbor within twenty-four hours of each other," but if there is no power with which to enforce the demand, then the two belligerents will be answerable to any neutral powers whose shipping they injure. The neutrality of the harbor of Chemulpo was genuine as regards the shipping of neutral powers and this is why the British, French and other commanders refused to shift

their anchorage at the suggestion of the Japanese. It was the privilege of these neutral commanders to say "This is a neutral port and you will come in and cause injury to our shipping at your peril, even though such injury should be unintentional." And if the Japanese had come in and attacked the Russians where they lay they would have been answerable for any injury done to neutral ships whether by their own guns or by those of the Russians, since the latter would be acting in self-defense. We do not presume to make the above statement as a definite interpretation of international law in the premises but only as a possible explanation of the actions of both the Japanese and the neutral commanders.

The next question is in regard to the reception of the Russians on board the neutral ships. We already said that as between the Japanese and the Russians the port was the same as the high sea and this appears from the fact that had the Russians abandoned their vessels and gone ashore they would have fallen into the hands of the Japanese as surely as if the shore had been another Japanese vessel on the high sea. The land was already held by the Japanese and was to all intents and purposes hostile soil to the Russians. But to the neutral vessels the port was *not* the high sea and they felt at liberty to act toward the Russians exactly as if there were no belligerent force outside—that is, as they would act, for instance, if these Russian boats had come into port in a sinking condition due to any accident at sea. The neutral commanders would not have invited these Russians on board their boats if it had been on the high sea, for that would have been an act of interferance hostile to Japan for which they would have had to answer before the bar of international law; but in a neutral port they recognized no war. The *Variak* was in a sinking condition but the *Koryetz* was intact, nevertheless the neutral commanders had a perfect right to take every one of the men on board their vessels if they saw fit. The Russian ships had not struck their flags to the Japanese nor had they indicated any intention to surrender. They had not compromised themselves by asking for a truce. They

had simply withdrawn from the fight, technically unbeaten, and had entered a neutral port where, according to the letter of international law, they were safe. They could blow up or scuttle their vessels if they pleased and they could visit other vessels at their pleasure. Such seems to have been the basis of the action of the neutral commanders, and it was sound, or they would not have acted as they did.

Some question has been raised as to the legality of the action of the French in letting a boat go from the *Pascal* to set fire to the *Sungari*. This act was plainly seen by competent witnesses. The question is whether, after the Russians went on board the French boat, they did not immediately become noncombatants and thereby incapacitated for any act of war. But even so the further question arises whether the burning of that merchant vessel was an act of war. It may be that it was done by the officers of the ship and not by Russian naval men. In any case this is one of the questions raised by the event. That the neutral commanders look upon these refugees as noncombatants is seen from their subsequent action.

In the final adjustment of the matter the neutral commanders engaged to take these men to ports belonging to their respective countries and there guarantee their parole till the end of the war. It is hard to see how this could be done without keeping them in confinement. If this is to be the outcome of it all there are some who will think that it would have been more soldierly to surrender at discretion and become Japanese prisoners of war whereby they would have stood some chance of an exchange of prisoners. They did not want to surrender, for that would have impaired their honor; but some will ask whether by becoming virtual prisoners to neutral powers and causing them annoyance and expense they did not impair their honor more than they would have done by surrendering. It is universally recognized that to surrender to overwhelming odds is an honorable proceeding for it saves useless shedding of blood; but circumstances alter cases and it must be left to those who are expert in

the technicalities of martial etiquette to determine to what extent these Russians preserved the luster of their nation's fame by accepting the offer of the neutral commanders.

Another phase of the matter appears when we attempt to surmise what the Japanese would have done had the situation been reversed. It is our opinion that if they had gone forth to a hopeless fight they would have fought it to a finish and when their vessels sank under them they would either have gone down with them or they would have abandoned ship and been picked up by the Russians as prisoners of war.

On the twenty-third of February the Korean and Japanese governments through their proper representatives signed a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance. Of course there is no use in discussing the degree of spontaneity with which the Korean government entered into this compact. It was, as the Koreans say, a case of *halsu epso;* but if we look at it from a democratic standpoint and ask what the majority of the Korean people think about it we shall get another aspect of the question. The present chaotic state of the national finances and of popular discontent show something of what Russian influence has accomplished in Korea; and the people are coming to realize the fact. They are passionately attached to the theory of national independence. We say *theory* advisedly. This word independence is a sort of fetich to which they bow, but they think that independence means liberation from outside control alone, forgetting that genuine independence means likewise a liberation from evil influences within, and that liberty so far from being *carte blance* to do as one pleases is in truth the very apotheosis of law. What Korea wants is education and until steps are taken in that line there is no use in hoping for a genuinely independent Korea. Now, we believe that a large majority of the best informed Koreans realize that Japan and Japanese influence stand for education and enlightenment and that while the paramount influence of any one outside power is in some sense a humiliation, the

paramount influence of Japan will cause far less genuine cause for humiliation than has the paramount influence of Russia. Russia secured her predominance by pandering to the worst elements in Korean officialdom. Japan holds it by strength of arm, but she holds it in such a way that it gives promise of something better. The word reform never passed the Russians' lips. It is the insistent cry of Japan. The welfare of the Korean people never showed its head above the Russian horizon but it fills the whole vision of Japan; not from altruistic motives mainly but because the prosperity of Korea and that of Japan rise and fall with the same tide.

Korea has reached a definite crisis in her history. If Russia wins, Korea will become a small fraction of that heterogeneous mass called the Holy Russian Empire, for by signing an offensive and defensive alliance with Japan Korea becomes the foe of Russia and this will be all the excuse Russia needs for seizing the whole peninsula in case the war terminates favorably for her. Having made this alliance, therefore, it is the business of all Koreans both official and non-official to bend every energy to the securing of a Japanese victory.

Korea has never had a better chance than the present to disprove the statements of those who say that the Koreans are a decadent people and lacking in stamina. Those who know best are aware that with a proper incentive and proper leadership the Koreans of the northern and eastern provinces would fight magnificently. They have not had an opportunity to show what they are made of since the days of the Tai-wun-kun when in 1866 they defeated the French in Kang-wha and in 1871 when they held a little fort on that Island against an overwhelming force of Americans and died every man at his post rather than give up their position. It should be remembered that there are some twelve or fifteen million people in Korea. From this number an army of two hundred thousand could be raised. Such an army properly fed, clothed, paid and led would prove a powerful weapon in the hands of the Japanese. Korea produces

enough rice and other food stuff to feed both the Korean people and the Japanese army and when once the Russians were driven out of Manchuria the Japanese army could leave behind them a competent Korean army to safeguard the frontier. This army at first under Japanese leadership would be a better military school than any built in Seoul, it would inspire the Koreans with self-respect and would soon break down the prevalent notion that military rank is inferior to civil rank.

What is meant by a decadent people? We say the North American Indian is decadent because he is unable to adjust himself to the changed conditions of life and is fast becoming extinct, but the Korean people are no more decadent than the Chinese. They are physically virile and can be proved to be cowards only when put to proper tests. These have never been applied during recent years excepting in the instances cited, which go to prove the opposite. Why does the Korean allow himself to be cuffed about at the pleasure of the alien when a Japanese would leap to his own defense? It is because the Korean knows that he has no means of proper redress, no consul to appeal to, no Government which considers the physical and property rights of its subjects its main objects for being. Give a Korean the right and the ability to summon his assailant before an unbiased tribunal and do the readers of this Review imagine the people even of Seoul would not leap to avenge themselves of the cuffs and kicks which are so freely bestowed upon them? That court would have to sit night and day for the first few weeks, until it should be discovered that Koreans have personal rights which people are bound to respect.

The coming of the Japanese troops has prevented the bringing of rice up to Seoul from the country, for the country-people are uncertain as to the safety of travel; and for this reason it will not be many weeks before Seoul is face to face with a very serious proposition. If the rice should give out there would be many deaths in

Seoul in a very short time. It should be one of the first things for the government to attend to. There is plenty of rice in the country, and ways and means for bringing it up to Seoul should be immediately considered. It would be a great pity if the coming in of the Japanese should even indirectly cause such a calamity. The one thing that Yi Yong-ik is praised for is the fact that he brought in Annam rice and relieved Seoul from starvation. If now there should be a scarcity here it would do much to cause disaffection against the Japanese. We hope that this important matter is already under consideration.

News Calendar.

On January 24th the Korean Government sent to various Powers a declaration of her neutrality. This was done without the knowledge of the Foreigns Office. The announcement was made to the various legations in Seoul at a late date.

On Jan. 24 the contract of the Belgian adviser to the Home Department was signed. It was dated from June 1903 and for a term of three years.

On the same day there came one hundred and forty-seven men to superintend the pushing of the construction of the Seoul-Fusan railway.

On Jan. 26 Pak Che-sun was appointed Foreign Minister; being in Peking he was immediately sent for. Min Yong-chul was appointed Minister to China in his place.

Pak Ch'ing-yang was appointed Minister of Education late in Jan. but as his duties in connection with the royal funeral demanded his attention Han K'ing-ho was appointed Acting Minister.

About Jan. 27 Russia, France, Germany, and England formally commended the declaration of neutrality. The other powers reserved their opinion.

All through the latter part of January the Korean soldiers and police levied blackmail on all wealthy houses in Pyeng-yang and the foreigners there were rather uneasy. Threats had been made against them by the *tonghak* and many of the natives were leaving the city, but on the 29th it was learned that one hundred Japanese residents of that city had formed a home guard and that all there were safe.

Because of the general uneasiness several foreigners in the employ of the goverment were asked to go to the palace and act as a sort of body-guard to His Majesty, beginning from about the 26th of January.

Tales of robberies all over the country came in to Seoul in rapid succession but we have not space to give them in detail. It is sufficient to say that great disaffection was evident throughout the country. There

were the tonghaks in the north, the namhak in the south and at the same time the ajuns throughout the country threatened to lead the people in a general insurrection.

All through January the Japanese were busy arranging military stations every forty li between Seoul and Fusan. In various places small buildings were erected sufficient to house twenty or thirty men.

On the 22nd of January Gen. Ijichi arrived in Seoul and became the military attaché of the Japanese legation. On the 26th he asked the Foreign Office what the position of the Korean Government actually was as between Russia and Japan and he demanded some definite statement. The Foreign Minister of course answered that Korea favored neither exclusively but was neutral.

On the 28th. ult. the Japanese brought in a large quantity of barley to Kunsan and landed it there. It appeared as if they intended to land troops there instead of at some more northerly port.

On Jan. 29 the Foreign Office complained to the Russian Legation of the disorderly actions of Russian soldiers in the street, who caught Korean women and forcibly kissed and otherwise insulted them. The Russians took steps to stop the outrages.

On Jan. 29 all military students in Japan were recalled by the Korean Government.

Instructions were sent to Min Yong-chan to attend the Red Cross Society's convention in Switzerland this Spring.

The Peddlars began their real work in January by levying on all the wealthy people in Seoul except high officials, under the pretense that was it payment for protection.

By the beginning of February it began to be plain that trouble was brewing. Hopes of peace which had up to that time been held out were withdrawn and the general feeling that Russia would back down at the last moment were shown to be false. Reports came continually of Russian movements toward the Yalu and the tone of the negotiations between the two countries became distinctly more uncompromising. The Korean people watched events with great interest but not so as to interfere with the annual stone fights which began rather earlier than usual this year.

On Feb. sixth a very unpleasant collision took place between Korean gendarmes and Russian soldiers. Two of the latter seized a woman on the street near the Japanese quarter and insulted her. A crowd gathered and assumed a most threatening attitude. The Russians drew their weapons and held the crowd at bay but some gendarmes came along who, after a brisk fight, succeeded in disarming the Russians and taking them to the Russian Legation.

Ont of 154 pawnshops in Seoul there are now only 70 in operation. This is a good gauge of the feelings of the people as to the security of property in war times.

The race of counterfeiters is not extinct. Japanese have lately been counterfeiting the Dai Ichi Ginko notes and passing them at Chemulpo. One culprit was caught and imprisoned for eight months, another for six months and another for three.

In the town of Chungju about 130 miles South from Seoul the Tonghaks gathered in force in January and declared that they were no longer Korean subjects and would not listen to the commands of the government.

Pak Che-sun the newly appointed Foreign Minister started from Peking on his way to Korea on Feb. 2nd but having come as far as Chin-whang Island near Port Arthur he put back to Tientsin because of the beginning of hostilities.

On Feb. 1st twenty-nine more Koreans started for Hawaii. We learn that recently the Koreans sent yen 500 of their earnings home to Korea in a single draft.

There is said to be a shortage in taxes from South Chulla Province of some $370,000, due to excessive rains and other causes.

On Feb. 2nd the Russians stored 1,500 tons of coal in their storehouses on Roze Island, also 100 bags of barley and other food stuffs.

About the middle of February Mr. W. F. Sands left Korea on his way to America.

On the eighth the Japanese authorities posted notices in Seoul saying that what Japan was about to do was dictated by motives of righteousness and that the property and personal rights of Koreans would be respected. If any Korean was ill-treated by a Japanese he must report the case and justice would be done him.

On the eighth persistent rumors of the approach of the Japanese were verified by the appearance of a large fleet of Japanese transports and war vessels off Chemulpo. The Russian Gunboat *Koryetz* attempted to leave for Port Arthur but was stopped by the Japanese fleet at the mouth of the bay and turned back. A shot was fired from the *Koryetz*, but it is claimed by the Russians that it was by accident. The Japanese fired two torpedoes at the *Koryetz* neither of which took effect Thereupon the Russian boat put back to her anchorage. At four o'clock three Japanese transports came into the harbor convoyed by two cruisers and three torpedo-boats The work of disembarkation began almost immediately and continued all night by the light of huge fires built on the jetty. The cruisers and torpedo-boats went out the same day and rejoined the fleet, commanded by Admiral Urui, his flagship being the *Naniwa*.

Early in February the people of Yichun seventy-two miles north of Seoul arose in revolt and drove their prefect away because of his extortions.

On Feb. 7th the government received a despatch from the prefect of Wiju saying that 8,000 Russians were approaching the border and that the Japanese were preparing to flee.

From the eighth of February the port of Chemulpo was in a sense blockaded by the Japanese, only by their consent could boats go in or out.

On the seventh the Foreign Office sent to all the Korean ports ordering that news should be immediately telegraphed of any important movements.

On the seventh the Japanese authorities posted up a notice in various parts of Seoul saying that the people must not be disturbed if Japanese troops should arrive; on the same day telegraphic connection with Pyŭngyang, Sungjin, Taiku, Chungju, Fusan and Masanpo was broken. The Japanese took possession of Prince Euiwha's house in Seoul and set a guard, but about the twentieth they gave it back again. It is said that the seizure was because of a debt and that when this was liquidated the house was again given up. The same day the Osaka Shosen Kaisha suspended their regular schedule of steamers to Korea

On the ninth occurred the Battle of Chemulpo which we have described elsewhere. The troops which had landed during the night came up to Seoul by rail. A large number of Japanese officials and others were at the South Gate Station to welcome them. It was not known whether there would be any popular demonstration against the entrance of the troops into the city but all such fears were groundless for everything remained perfectly quiet and the entrance took place without any excitement at all. Even the Korean crowd that gathered to witness the event was comparatively small. His Majesty was considerably disturbed by this coming of the Japanese in force but no Japanese went near the palace nor was there any cause for alarm. At twelve o'clock the noise of the cannonading at Chemulpo was plainly heard in Seoul and people listened in awe to the distant thunder of battle wondering what it portended. There was no such exodus from the city as might have been expected but it is said that a considerable number of wealthy men sent their families and their valuables out of the city. It was on this same day that the Japanese took possession of the Korean telegraph offices at Masanpo and Fusan. Immediately after the battle the Japanese authorities put a guard about the Russian Consulate in Chemulpo and no one could see the Russian Consul without first securing a pass from the Japanese Consul. Some understand that this was for the purpose of protecting the Consul. A guard was also put over the offices of the Eastern Steamship Company of which Mr. Sabatin was agent, and other Russian houses were also guarded. This same day the Japanese began coaling the Korean war-vessel the *Yang-mu-ho*. This boat had been partially paid for by the Korean government. The beginning of active hostilities immediately affected exchange and the price of a yen fell from $2.30 to $1.60 in Korean money.

Great uneasiness is said to exist in Pyengyang among the natives and many are fleeing to the country because of the near approach of the Russians. One thing is certain, the Koreans feel very differently toward the Japanese than toward the Russians.

On the twelfth of February at half past seven in the morning the Russian Minister and all the other members of the Legation Staff and all Russian residents in Seoul went to the West Gate Station and took a special train for Chemulpo. They were attended by about eighty Russian soldiers. Many of the other Foreign Representatives were on the station platform to bid the Russian Minister and his suite good bye but not a single Korean official was there.

On Feb. 2nd the Russian Minister replied to a protest of the Korean Government against the cutting of timber at Pyŭk-dong, some distance back from the Yalu, saying that the concession covered not only the banks of that river but of all its tributaries!

On Feb. 2nd Dr. Furuichi the new president of the Seoul-Fusan Railway arrived at Fusan and a few days later he reached Seoul.

On Feb. 5th the Japanese Minister ordered all Japanese subjects to remove from Wiju and Sŭngjin.

About the 23rd inst Dr. Takaki of the First Japanese Bank started for Tokyo. His departure was due to a difference of opinion as to the policy to be adopted by the bank in Seoul. It may not be generally known that the Seoul Branch of the Dai Ichi Ginko is the third largest one, only Chemulpo and Yokohama exceeding it in size. Dr. Takaki will soon be back in Seoul.

On the eleventh Yun Ung-yŭl was made Minister of War.

The prefect of Nam-wŭn in Chulla Province telegraphed on the eleventh saying that Japanese had demanded 1,000 bags of rice, 1,000 loads of firewood and 300 telegraph posts. That same evening the only places that were still connected with Seoul by Korean telegraph were Haiju, Songdo, Chemulpo and Wonsan.

A goodly number of war-correspondents have arrived on the scene and more are expected. They are having difficulty in securing their credentials from Tokyo. Several of them have gone north without their papers, trusting, probably, that these will come on later. Horse flesh is soaring, one Korean refusing to sell his animal for less than Yen 400. Japanese interpreters have been in brisk demand, some getting as high as Yen 200 a month for following the war with correspondents. Mr. Jack London who represents the Hearst syndicate had a hard time in getting here. He succeeded in making Mokpo in small coasting steamers but from there he had to come in a sampan. He made Kunsan in twenty-seven hours but from there to Chemulpo occupied five days, owing to strong head winds and rough seas.

All through the month persistent rumors have been circulating to the effect that the Russians had crossed the Yalu. About the 20th of February Major Togo together with six gendarmes and two interpreters were seized by the Russians at Wiju. These Japanese were on a scouting tour but were not technically within the Russian lines, so they will doubtless be treated as prisoners of war. Then it was reported that the Russians were in Chŏngju some two thousand strong while 400 more were in Kasan. Then scouts were seen opposite the river from Anju and at last reports Russian videttes were seen by Japanese between Pyengyang and Anju but both sides retired without attacking. The telegraph wires were cut between Pyengyang and Anju. It is the thought that the Russians will attempt to impede the progress of Japanese toward the Yalu so as to gain time and prevent the Japanese utilizing ice to cross that river. In her unprepared state every day's delay means much to Russia and this policy is quite easy to understand. In

spite of the Russians being in Anju the Americans at the Unsan mines came down to Pyengyang on the 24th. It is not known yet whether they got out before the Russians appeared in the vicinity or whether they came through the Russian lines.

At midnight of the 23rd of February the final seal was put upon the Korea-Japan alliance, whereby, among other things, Korea grants Japan leave to use her territory in the present campaign against Russia, Japan guarantees Korea her independence subject to certain conditions necessary under the circumstances. There are those who claim that Korean independence is a thing of the past, and it is true that for the time being it is slightly adumbrated by the coming of the Japanese but it remains to be seen whether, after the present crisis is over, Japan will not accord to Korea the same degree of genuine independence as the United States has granted Cuba. It will depend much upon Korea herself whether this desirable goal is ever reached. If she proves that there are Koreans capable of carrying on an enlightened administration here her chances of real independence may be good, but the future alone can decide this. Of one thing there can be little doubt, that the present action of Korea gives promise of better things in the future than any other action could have done. It is a right step if rightly followed up. It may not be a satisfactory situation for the Koreans to contemplate but it is a necessary result of coquetting with Russia, from whom she has nothing to hope and every thing to fear.

It is said, with what truth we do not know, that when a person is being fascinated by a snake it causes him an unpleasant shock when a third party comes in and breaks the spell. Whether the simile applies we leave it for our readers to determine.

The need for Japanese barracks has caused some commotion in Seoul. Every Japanese house is full, half the Government barracks and nineteen other public buildings are crowded, among them all the Government schools.

On the night of the Yi Yong-ik was taken to Chemulpo by the Japanese and put on board a boat bound for Japan. The country is thus rid of a man who though possessed of a certain degree of ability has done very much to bring the Korean government into difficulties. He was detested by the common people and hated by officials. It shows his ability that, without any family backing, he held his own so long against the almost unanimous opposition of the official class. We will give a resumé of his his career later.

About the 26th Yi Keun-tak, one of the leading pro-Russians, left Seoul for the country, having seen all his promises of Russian help fall to the ground. Hyŭn Sang-geun is said to be in asylum in one of the Foreign Legations. He is probably safer there than in his own home at this juncture. It is a credit to the Japanese that this radical change has been effected without bloodshed among Korean officials. In time these men who have deceived the Emperor so long may be brought to book but if so it will be by proper process of law.

The peddlars guild dropped to pieces like a house of cards. They were evidently a pack of cowards intent only upon plunder, if the opportunity should come.

As a rule the Japanese soldiers are very orderly but we were sorry to hear that an American lady while passing through the Japanese quarter on the 25th. was struck violently in the back by a Japanese soldier who was off duty. It seems to be best for foreign ladies to go about either in chairs or rickshas rather that on foot at such a time as this. There is no doubt that the Japanese authorities have every intention of keeping exemplary order among the troops but it is the best thing to give as little opportunity as possible to the Japanese soldiers to show incivility, by refaining from walking about among them more than is absolutely necessary.

We were sorry to learn that Dr. O. R. Avison's two youngest children were bitten by a pet dog which died later under very suspicious circumstances. It is not absolutely certain that the dog was rabid but Dr. Avison has taken the children to Nagasaki to be treated at the Pasteur Institute there.

It has been repeatedly stated that the Korean troops are to join the Japanese in the present campaign and as the month draws to an end it begins to look as if it were true. On the 27th. it was stated that after the funeral of the Queen Dowager several thousand will go north.

Telegraphic news from the north on the 27th stated that Russian forces crossing Ma-jun Pass in the north were opposed by Korean soldiers and several of the latter were killed.

On the twenty-sixth the Japanese asked the Korean government to permit them to build a railroad between Seoul and Wiju. Up to the time of going to press the reply had not been given but there can be no doubt that it will be given. It is believed that the Japanese contemplate beginning the construction of the road very soon.

Koreans of certain classes are reaping a golden harvest by the coming of the Japanese. Coolies who received about thirty sen a day are now receiving Yen 3 per day for carrying loads north. From this amount thirty sen are deducted and given to the foreman of each gang. There are certain other fees to be paid out of it but at the very least they get Yen 2 a day for their labor. The sudden demand for Korean money to use in the country is what has driven exchange to its present figure. It will spell ruin to many a Korean who receives his twenty or thirty Korean dollars a month, for prices remain at the point where they were when exchange was double what it is now. It is easy to push prices up but hard to pull them down again.

One of the Korean refugees in Tokyo has given Yen 10,000 to the Japanese war fund.

The Japanese seem to be prepared for every contingency. They are masters of detail and they may be depended upon to know what their resources are and how to utilize them at any moment. It is this ability

to handle large bodies of men with ease and facility that augurs well for their success Some one put it very well the other day when he said that the Russians are stubborn fighters but each man must be given a definite command at every move while with the Japanese each man, while thoroughly amenable to orders, is an intellegent fighter and uses his head as well as his muscles.

It has been said that when the Americans in Pyengyang find it necessary to remove from that place they will be sent to Shanghai rather than to Seoul, for if the need should arise of foreigners leaving Seoul as well there would be double work. It is to be hoped that war will work northward rather than southward.

All Russian property in Seoul was put in care of the French when the Russians left Seoul.

For a few days it was rather difficult to get mail out of Korea but as soon as the landing of troops began in earnest, the returning transports began to carry mail nearly every day to Japan.

The Chief Eunuch, Kang Sūk-ho, who has been strongly pro-Russian in his sympathies is reported to be about to make a protracted visit to the country.

Min Sang-ho, the popular chief of the Postal and Telegraph Bureau has resigned and Yi Ha-yŭng has taken his place.

On Feb. 28th the rather startling news arrived in Seoul that fifty Russian cavalrymen appeared outside the north gate of Pyeng-yang near the tomb of Kija. They were fired upon by the Japanese guards at the gate. They returned the fire but soon retired in the direction they had come. Only a part of the Americans living in Sun-chun arrived in Pyang-yang before this skirmish took place and there is some anxiety as to their condition. It is said the Russians are treating the natives very well in the north and there is very little danger that these foreigners will be molested.

KOREAN HISTORY.

If a Chinaman or a Manchu should come here and do as your people did they would be treated in the same manner as we did your people. In fact, we did put to death a Chinaman because he came here in disguise and changed his costume; and the Chinese government never said a word about it, for they knew this to be our law. Even had we known their nationality, their actions were so contrary to our laws that we could hardly have spared them, how much less then when we did know it. This matter hardly needs more explanation. Your letter was sent without the proper formalities and we are not bound to answer it. This is not a matter that a mere provincial governor can handle. As we are China's vassal it is our duty to consult the court at Peking on all foreign matters. Tell this to your chief and do not be surprised that in order to show the true state of the case we have been led to speak thus plainly."

One needs but to read this to see that it is an unanswerable argument. From a merely political and legal point of view the Korean government had all the facts on her side, though from the standpoint of humanity they were wrong. It is strange that they omitted the strongest argument of all namely, that they asked the Frenchmen to leave and they refused. It is evident that by so doing they made themselves amenable to Korean law, and took the consequences, good or bad. One cannot admire enough the heroism which they displayed in staying to suffer with their coreligionists, though the opportunity was given them to save themselves by departure. It cannot be doubted that the rapid spread of Catholicism in Korea is due in large measure to the heroic self-sacrifice of those men and others like them, who literally gave their lives to the work. It would be wrong however to say that the government was wholly without excuse.

This answer was not accepted as satisfactory by the French government and a rejoinder was sent saying that thereafter French subjects who should be taken on Korean soil must be sent to Peking, otherwise the Korean government would lay itself open to grave evils. But soon after

this the revolution of 1848 took place in France and these eastern questions were all forgotten for the time being.

In 1849 the king died without male issue and his grandmother Kim nominated his nephew, the son of a banished brother. The young man entered upon the duties of his office at the age of nineteen and he is known by his posthumous title of Ch'ŭl-jong Tă-wang. This reign of fourteen years beheld some important reforms. The law was reaffirmed that the families of banished men might follow them into exile. Gambling was severely interdicted. The merchants' monopolies were broken up. A hard fight was made against bribery and peculation in high places. Country gentlemen were forbidden to seize and beat any one belonging to the lower orders.

This king was the son Prince Chun-gye by a slave woman named Kang. He was the great-grandson of the Crown Prince, Sado, whom his father nailed up in the box.

His reign was an important one in two respects. First the very rapid spread of Roman Catholcism and second the settled policy which was adopted toward all outside influences. When the reign began there were about 11,000 Christians in Korea and when it closed in 1863 there were in the vicinity of 20,000, or almost double. Everyone knew that to combat it there would be need of a king of a different calibre from Ch'ŭl jong; and so during these years the work of propagating the new faith went on steadily and without any considerable drawbacks. The picture of the country as drawn by the French is indeed a sad one. They say the king had shown himself quite incapable and had become a mere debauche. The highest officials were fattening off the people and the latter were frequently consulting the books of prophecy which foretold the disolution of the dynasty. And now foreigners began to enter the country in greater numbers. Maistre, Janson, Berneux followed each other in quick succession in the early fifties. The latter became Bishop of Korea.

About the end of 1860 came the news of the fall of Peking before the combined French and English forces, the flight of the Emperor and the burning and looting of the Summer Palace. The news was that thousands of foreigners had come

to overthrow the empire. The utmost consternation prevailed in Seoul. An official memorialised the throne giving three causes for lively concern.

(1) The Emperor, fleeing before his enemies, might wish to find asylum in Korea, or at least might take refuge in some Manchu fortress just beyond the border. Every possible approach ought to be strictly guarded so that the Emperor might not dare to force his way into Korean territory. (This shows the depth of Korea's loyalty to China.)

(2) The outlaw bands that infested the neutral strip between Korea and China might attempt an invasion of Korea and forts ought to be built to prevent such an enterprise.

(3) Worst of all, there might be a possible invasion of Korea by the foreigners. Korean cities would be wrecked, the morals of the people would be lowered, a depraved religion would be established. As the foreigners were strong only on the sea or on level ground the mountainous character of Korea would be of material advantage to her. The army should be reorganised, and forts should be built along the principal approaches to Seoul; also at Tong-nă, Nam-yang, Pu-byŭng and In-ju. A fort should be built on high ground commanding the passage of the narrows at Kang-wha. Western boats could not of course ascend the Han River. As the foreign religion spread rapidly in the provinces every precaution should be taken to prevent the foreign priests communicating with their countrymen abroad.

The ministry and the people all applauded this plan and the memorialist was made a judge and given power to carry out his scheme. But news came thick and fast telling of the killing of thousands of Chinese soldiers, and the returning embassy in February 1861, gave definite news of the flight of the Emperor and the treaty wrested from the great Chinese empire. This news electrified the people. All business was suspended. The well-to-do people all fled to mountain retreats the doughty memorialist among the first. The ministers sent away their families and their goods. Many of the high officials asked the protection of the Roman Catholics, and tried to procure Roman Catholic books or badges of any kind, and many wore these at their belts in broad daylight. The yamen-runners were loud in their protestations that they had

had nothing to do with the persecution of the Catholics. It was believed by the French in Korea at the time that a most favorable treaty could have been concluded just at that time; but no effort in that direction was made by the French.

Gradually the excitement abated and preparations for war were pushed, the wealthy classes supplying the money for the same. Old arms were resurrected, and cannon were cast on the model of one obtained from the French wrecks. At this time there were nine Frenchmen in Korea.

The year 1861 was a hard one for the people. They were taxed to the last farthing and local riots were exceedingly common. The French give us an amusing incident, where the widows of a certain prefecture were taxed. They rose up *en masse* and mobbed the prefect's office, caught his mother, tore off all her garments and left her well nigh naked. This of course meant that the prefect was disgraced for life.

Chapter XIV.

Beside the death-bed of King Ch'ŭl-jong....a bold woman....rise of the Tong-hak....its founder killed....the King's father becomes regent ....his two mistakes ...he selects a Queen....Russian request.... the Regent pushed by the conservative party....death-warrant of ....Bishop Berneux ...French priests executed....priceless manuscript lost a French priest escapes to China and tells the news ....China advises Korea to make peace....shipwreck of the "Surprise"....face of the "General Sherman" .. persecution renewed ... French reconnoitering expedition... blockade of the Han announced ..French expedition under Admiral Roze... preparations for defense... correspondence....French defeat....the French retire Koreans exultant .... persecution redoubled .... the Kyŭng-bok Palace rebuilt American expedition under Admiral Rodgers.... American victory on Kang-wha ... the fleet retires .. monument erected in Seoul.

The events of the present reign, which began in January 1864, are fresh in the memory of many still living, and the account here given is taken largely from statements of eye-witnesses of the scenes therein described. A detailed history of the present reign would fill a volume in itself and of course we can but briefly touch upon the leading events in it.

The circumstances which ushered in the reign are graphically described by Dallet and are substantially as follows. King Ch'ŭl-jong had been suffering for some time with a pulmonary affection, but in January of 1864 he seemed better and he began to walk about a little. On the fifteenth, feeling greater uneasiness than usual, he went into his garden for a walk. There he was suddenly taken with faintness and was just able to drag himself back to his room, where he fell in a dying condition. The Minister Kim Choa-geun, his son Kim Pyŭng-gu and three other relatives were immediately in attendance. As they were deliberating, the nephew of the Dowager Queen Cho, widow of the King Ik-jong, happened to pass, and seeing what was going on, he hastened to his aunt's apartments and exclaimed, "What are you doing here? The king is dead." He advised her to hasten to the king's apartments, gain possession of the royal seals and nominate to the throne some one of her choice, declaring him to be the son and heir of King Ik-jong, her husband. This woman thereupon hastened to the side of the expiring king where she found the attendants, as we have said, and with them the queen, who held the royal seals in a fold of her skirt. The Dowager Queen peremptorily demanded these seals, and when the queen demurred she snatched them violently from her. No one dared oppose the determined woman who thus took fortune by the forelock and in the course of a moment turned the course of empire. She then made proclamation in the name of the king, saying "The king says the royal seals shall be in charge of Queen Cho. The throne shall go to Myŭng-bok, second son of Prince Heung-sŭng (whose name was Yi Ha-eung). Minister Chong shall be executor of the king's will and Minister Kim shall go and find the newly appointed king." The Dowager Queen Cho thus became Regent and the queen's party, the Kim family, had to retire from power.

It was at the very beginning of the reign that the peculiar sect called the Tong-hak arose in the south. Its founder was one Ch'oe Pok-sul of Kyŏng-ju in Kyŭng-sang Province. The great formula of the sect was the mysterious sentence *Ch'ŭn Ju cho a chung yŭng se bul mang man sa eui*, which means "May the Lord of Heaven aid our minds that we may ever

remember, and may He make all things turn out according to our desire." The adherents of this sect would sit and sing this formula by the hour. They would also dance, brandishing swords in a sort of frenzy, and pretend to be rising to heaven. The name Tong-hak or "Eastern Sect" was given by themselves to distinguish themselves from the Sŭ-hak or "Western Sect," namely Roman Catholicism. So at least some affirm. Its rise was exceedingly rapid and soon it had enrolled an enormous number of people. The government was at last obliged to take cognizance of it, and a body of troops was sent south, who captured and put to death the founder of the sect. This put an end for the time to its active propagandism but it was by no means dead, as we shall see.

The Dowager Queen Cho was a violent opponent of Christianity and filled all the offices with enemies of the Roman Catholics. But she was not to hold the reins of power long. The king's father in view of his son's elevation to the throne had received the title Prince Tă-wŭn, or Tă-wŭn-gun as he is usually called. He was a man of commanding personality and inflexible will and on the whole he was the most striking character in modern Korean history. He has been variously estimated. Some have considered him the greatest statesman in Korea; others have taken him for a mere demagogue. His main characteristic was an indomitable will which took the bit in its teeth and swept toward the goal of its desire irrespective of every obstacle, whether of morals, economics, politics or consanguinity. He was withal unable to read the signs of the times. The two great mistakes of his life were, first in supposing he could eradicate Roman Catholicism by force, and second in supposing that he could prevent the opening of Korea to treaty relations. The regency naturally passed into his hands and he tacitly agreed to uphold the principles of the conservative party that had raised him to power.

His first act was to order a remeasurement of the tilled land of the country with a view to the increasing of the revenue. The treasury was empty and he had plans in mind that would require money. One of these plans was the erection of a new palace on the ruins of the Kyŏng-bok Palace, an enterprise which the finances of the country by no means war-

ranted. His next act was to betroth his son the king to his wife's niece. His wife had two brothers one of whom was living but the other had died leaving one daughter. It was this daughter of Min Ch'i-rok who became queen. She was the king's senior by four years. As her father was dead she became the foster child of her uncle Min Ch'i-gu. In this union, as every one knows, the Regent sought to cement his own power, but, as every one likewise knows, he made a serious mistake.

In January 1866 a Russian gunboat dropped anchor in the harbor of Wŭn-san and a letter was sent to Seoul asking for freedom of trade with Korea. The answer given was that as Korea was the vassal of China the matter must be negotiated at Peking, and an envoy was dispatched for that purpose.

It is said that Roman Catholic adherents made use of the great uneasiness which prevailed in government circles respecting Russia to compose a letter urging that the only way to ward off Russia was by making an alliance with France and England. It is said that the Regent received this communication and gave it special and, as some believe, favorable attention. We are told that the Roman Catholics were all in a most hopeful state of mind, fully believing the hour had come for the awakening of Korea. In the light of subsequent events it is difficult to determine whether the Regent's interest in the plan was real or whether it was a ruse whereby to make the final *coup* all the more effective. All things considered, the latter theory fits the facts more perfectly. The French themselves believed the Regent was pushed on to the great persecution of 1866 by the violent anti-Christian party that had put him in power, and that it was simply another case of "If thou do it not thou art not Caesar's friend." They found fault with him for harboring the idea of a combination with this foreign element and demanded the death of the foreign priests and a general persecution. It is said the Regent reminded them of the burning of the Summer Palace at Peking and the taking of that Imperial Capital, but that they answered that they had killed Frenchmen before without harm resulting, and they could do it again.

Whatever may have been the pressure brought to bear on him, he finally signed the death warrant of all the foreign

priests in the land, and on February 23rd Bishop Berneux was seized and thrown into the common jail, but two days later he was transferred to the prison where noble prisoners were confined. On the 26th he was brought before the tribunal where he gave his name as Chang. He said he had come to save the souls of the Koreans and that he had been in the country ten years. He refused to leave except by force. As the government had made up its mind as to its course, his death warrant was then made out, and it ran thus: "The accused, Chang, refuses to obey the king. He will not apostatize. He will not give the information demanded. He refuses to return to his own country. Therefore, after the usual punishments, he will be decapitated." While he was awaiting his end, Bretenières, Beaulieu, and Dorie were taken, and after similar trial were condemned to death. All four of these heroic men were decapitated at the public execution ground near the river on the eighth of March and their bodies were buried together in a trench, from which they were recovered six months later and given burial by Roman Catholic adherents. Four days later two more priests, Petitnicolas and Pourthiè, were executed at the same place. It was the latter who lost at this time not only his life but his priceless manuscripts, a Korean Grammar and a Latin-Korean-Chinese Dictionary, on which he had been at work for ten years. Three more of the priests, Daveluy, Aumaitre and Huin were seized soon after this and put to death, but not till the latter had despatched a letter to China, which was destined to turn up long afterward. There were three priests left, Calais, Feron and Ridel. The last of these was selected to attempt the journey to China and give information of these terrible events. After almost incredible labors he succeeded in getting away from the shore of Whang-hã Province in a junk together with eleven native believers, and made his way to Chefoo. From there he hastened to Tientsin and informed Admiral Roze of the death of his fellow-countrymen. The Admiral promised to hasten to the rescue of the remaining two and the avenging of those who had been slain; but a revolt in Cochin-China prevented him from redeeming his promise until the following September.

The Chinese government, through the annual embassy,

informed the king of Korea that the killing of foreigners was an exceedingly foolish proceeding and that he had better make peace with France on the best terms possible, for if China could not withstand her surely Korea could not. The Regent replied, however, that it was not the first time French blood had remained unavenged in Korea.

On June 24th an American sailing vessel, the "Surprise," was wrecked off the coast of Whang-hă Province. Her captain and crew were hospitably treated and conducted to the Chinese border with great care, by order of the Regent, who thus illustrated the truth of the assertion that Korea would do no harm to men who were ship-wrecked on her coast. Even in the midst of an anti-foreign demonstration of the most severe type, these men were humanely treated and sent upon their way.

Early in September the sailing vessel "General Sherman" entered the mouth of the Ta-dong River. She carried five white foreigners and nineteen Asiatics. Her ostensible object was trade. The governor of P'yŭng-an Province sent, demanding the cause of her coming and the answer was that they desired to open up trade with Korea. Though told that this was impossible, the foreign vessel not only did not leave but, on the contrary, pushed up the river until she reached a point opposite Yang-jak Island not far from the city of P'yŭng-yang. It was only the heavy rains in the interior and an exceptionally high tide that allowed her to get across the bar, and soon she was stuck in the mud, and all hopes of ever saving her were gone. This rash move astonished the Koreans above measure. Something desperate must be the intentions of men who would drive a ship thus to certain destruction. After a time word came from the Regent to attack her if she did not leave at once. Then the fight began, but without effect on either side until the Koreans succeeded in setting fire to the "General Sherman" with fire-rafts. The officers and crew then were forced to drop into the water, where many of them were drowned. Those that reached the shore were immediately hewn down by the frenzied populace. The trophies of this fight are shown today in the shape of the anchor chains of the ill-fated vessel, which hang in one of the gateways of P'yŭng-yang. No impartial student of both sides

of this question can assert that the Koreans were specially blame-worthy. The ship had been warned off but had rashly ventured where no ship could go without being wrecked even were all other circumstances favorable. The Koreans could not know that this was a mere blunder. They took the vessel, and naturally, to be a hostile one and treated her accordingly.

In September the persecution of Roman Catholic adherents was resumed. This is said to have been caused by a letter from one of the Christians to the Regent urging a treaty of peace with France. But by this time Admiral Roze was ready to redeem his promise, and on the tenth of that month Bishop Ridel boarded his flag-ship at Chefoo. The French authorities had already informed the Chinese at Peking that France did not recognise the suzerainty of China over Korea and asserted that the land about to be conquered would be disposed of as France wished without reference to the Pekin government. It was decided to send the corvette *la Primauguet*, and the aviso, *le Déroulède*, and the gunboat, *Tardif*, to make a preliminary survey of the approaches to Seoul. Bishop Ridel accompanied this expedition in the capacity of interpreter. Arriving off Clifford Islands on the twentieth, the little fleet entered Prince Jerome Gulf, and the following day *le Déroulède* was sent to explore the entrance to the Han River. Finding the channel between Kang-wha and the mainland satisfactory, she returned to the anchorage and together they steamed up the river the only casualty being the loss of the false keel of the Primauguet. These vessels steamed up the river as far as the river towns opposite the capital, silencing a few forts on the way. Bishop Ridel used all his powers of persuasion to induce the commander to leave one of these boats here while the others went to China to report, but without avail. They all steamed away together.

Meanwhile there was panic in Seoul. The end had come, in the estimation of many of the people. A general stampede ensued and nearly a quarter of the citizens of Seoul fled away, leaving their houses and goods. We will remember that when Ridel escaped from Korea he left two companions behind. These made a desperate attempt to communicate with the French boats on the river, but so fierce was the persecution

and so watchful were the authorities that they were quite unable to do so. They finally escaped, however, by means of junks which carried them out into the Yellow Sea, where they fell in with Chinese boats that carried them to China.

Before the surveying expedition sailed back to China Bishop Ridel was informed by native Christians of the burning of the "General Sherman" and the fate of her crew, the renewal of the persecution and the order that all Christians be put to death after only a preliminary trial. He urged the commandant to stay, but the fleet sailed away and reported in China, where the real punitive expedition was rapidly preparing. On October eleventh the blockade of the Han River was announced to the Chinese authorities and to the various powers through their representatives at Peking, and then the French fleet sailed away to the conquest of Korea. The flotilla consisted of the seven boats *Querriere*, *Laplace*, *Primauguet*, *Deroulede*, *Kienchan*, *Tardif* and *Lebrethom*.

But while these preparations were going on, other preparations were going on in Korea. The total complement of troops throughout the peninsula was called into requisition. Arms were forged and troops drilled. The Japanese government, even, was invited to take a hand in the war that was impending, but she did not respond. Japan herself was about to enter upon a great civil war, and had no force to spare for outside work, even if she had had the desire.

On October thirteenth the French fleet reached Korea and three days later the attack on Kang-wha commenced. In an hour's time the town was in the possession of the French and large amounts of arms, ammunition and provisions were seized, besides various other valuables such as treasure, works of art, books and porcelain. This reverse by no means disheartened the Koreans. Gen. Yi Kyŭng-ha was put in charge of the forces opposed to the "invaders." This force was led in person by Gen. Yi Wŭn-heui who found the French already in possession of the fortress. The Koreans were in force at Tong-jin just across the estuary from Kang-wha, and, fearing that the vessels would attempt to ascend the river, they sank loaded junks in the channel. This channel must have been much deeper than it is today.

The Regent swore that any man who should suggest peace with the enemy should meet with instant death. A letter was sent to the French saying that the priests had come in disguise and had taken Korean names and had desired to lay their hands on the wealth of the land. It declared that the priests had been well killed. In reply the French said they had come in the name of Napoleon, Sovereign of the Grand French Empire, who desired the safety of his subjects, and that since nine of his subjects had been killed, it must be explained. They also demanded the three ministers who had been foremost in the persecution and in the killing of the priests should be handed over to them and that a plenipotentiary be appointed for the ratifying of a treaty. To this letter no answer was received.

Meanwhile Gen. Yang Hön-su had led 5,000 men to the fortress of Chöng-jok on Kang-wha where a celebrated monastery stands. These men were mostly hardy mountaineers and tiger-hunters from Kang-gye in the far north, the descendants of those same men who in the ancient days of Ko-yuryŭ drove back an army of Chinese 300,000 strong and destroyed all but 700 of them. This fortress is admirably situated for defense, lying as it does in a cup formed by a semi-circle of mountains and approachable from only one direction, where it is guarded by a crenellated wall and a heavy stone gate.

The great mistake of the French was in supposing this place could be stormed by a paltry 160 men. The whole French force could not have done it. No sooner had this little band come well within range of the concealed garrison than it was met by a withering fire which instantly put half of them *hors de combat.* After some attempts to make a stand in the shelter of trees, huts, rocks and other cover, a retreat was called and the French moved slowly back carrying their dead and wounded. They were closely pursued and with difficulty made their way back to the main body. The result would probably have been much more serious had not the retreating party been met by a body of reinforcements from the main body. The next day orders were given to fire the town and re-embark. This caused great surprise and dissatisfaction among the men, but we incline to the belief that

it was the only thing to do. The number of men that had been mustered to effect the humiliation of Korea was ridiculously small compared with what was necessary. Six thousand French might have done it, but six hundred—never. We need seek no further than this for the cause of the abandonment of the enterprise. To be sure, it had done infinitely more harm than good, and if it had been possible to succeed even at a heavy cost of life it would have been better to go on; but it was not possible.

The effect of this retreat upon the Regent and the court may be imagined. Peking had fallen before these "barbarians" but the tiger-hunters of the north had driven them away in confusion. If the reader will try to view this event from the ill-informed standpoint of the Korean court, he will see at once that their exultation was quite reasonable and natural. The last argument against a sweeping persecution of Christians was now removed and new and powerful arguments in favor of it were added. The fiat went forth that the plague of the foreign religion should be swept from the land. No quarter was to be given. Neither age nor sex nor quality were to weigh in the balance. From that time till 1870 the persecution was destined to rage with unabated fury and the French estimated the number killed at 8,000. The hardships and sufferings of this time are second to none in the history of religious persecutions. Hundreds fled to the mountains and there starved or froze to death. The tales of that terrible time remind one of the persecutions under the Roman Emperors or the no less terrible scenes of the Spanish Inquisition.

But to return to 1866. There were other events of interest transpiring. The pet scheme of the Regent to build his son a new palace was being worked out. The palace was in process of erection, when suddenly the funds gave out. Here the Regent committed his next great blunder. This time it was in the realm of finance. He entertained the fallacy that he could meet a deficit by coining money. Of course the only way to meet a deficit in this way was to debase the currency. He did it on a grand scale when he once determined upon it, for whereas the people had from time immemorial used a one-cash piece, he began to mint a hundred-cash piece

which was actually less than fifty cash in weight. One of these was given as a day's wage to each of the workmen on the palace. This coin bore on its face the legend "The great Finance Hundred Cash Piece," but it proved to be very small finance indeed, for of course its issue was immediately followed by an enormous rise in the price of all commodities, and rice went up two hundred per cent. The government was thus plunged deeper in the mire than ever; but the Regent had set his will on this thing and was determined to carry it through at any cost. His next move, taken in the following year, was to bring in old, discarded, Chinese cash literally by the cart-load, across the border. This he had bought in China at auction prices and forced on the people as legal tender. At the same time he forced the people to work in gangs of 300 at a time on the palace without pay. In this way the work was finished, but it is safe to say that to this day the country has not recovered from the effects of that mad financiering. Wealthy citizens were called upon to make donations to the building fund, and this gained the soubriquet of "The Free-will Offering."

The year 1868, which meant so much for Japan, was not otherwise signalised in Korea than by a demand on the part of Russia that Korean refugees beyond the border be recalled. It also beheld the publication of the work "The Six Departments and their Duties." In September alone 2,000 Christians were killed, five hundred of them being residents of Seoul.

The United States had not forgotten the fate of the "General Sherman." She had no intention of letting the matter drop. In the early spring of 1871 minister Frederick F. Low, at Peking, received instructions from his government to go in company with Rear-admiral Rodgers to the shores of Korea and attempt to conclude a treaty relative to the treatment of American seamen who might be cast upon the shores of that country. He was also instructed to try to make a trade convention with Korea looking toward the opening of Korea to foreign commerce. The fleet consisted of the war vessels *Colorado*, *Alaska*, *Bernicia*, *Monocacy*, and *Palos*. These vessels rendezvoused at Nagasaki and on May sixteenth they set sail for Korea. Minister Low's correspondence with his

government shows that he had accurately gauged the probabilities of the situation. A long acquaintance with the Korean could not have rendered his diagnosis of the case more accurate than it was. From the very first he considered it to bea hopeless case, and he was right. But this in no way lessened the care he exercised in doing every thing in his power to render the expedition a success. After fourteen days of struggle against dense fogs, tortuous channels and swift tidal currents the fleet dropped anchor off the islands known as the Ferrierre group, not far from Eugénie Island. This was on May 30th. They had not been there long before they were boarded by some small officials with whom Minister Low was of course unable to treat, but through them he sent a friendly message to Seoul asking that an official of equal rank with the American envoy be sent to confer with him on important matters. The Koreans had already received through the Chinese an intimation of what the Americans desired but they argued that as their policy of carrying ship-wrecked mariners safely across the border was well known abroad and as they did not care to open up relations with other countries, there was no call to send an envoy to treat with the Americans. The Regent shrewdly, though mistakenly, suspected that the "General Sherman" affair was at the bottom of this, as the death of the French priests had been the cause of the French expedition and he decided to garrison Kang-wha and deal with the Americans as he had with the French. Gen. O-Yŏ-jŭn was sent with 3,000 troops to Kwang Fort on the island of Kang-wha. A part of this force was stationed as garrison at Tok-chin, a little fort at the narrowest part of the estuary between Kang-wha and the mainland, where the tide runs through with tremendous force and a dangerous reef adds to the difficulty of navigation.

Thus it was that when the *Monocacy* and *Palos* steamed slowly up the channel on a tour of inspection they were fired upon by the guns of this little fort. No special damage was done, and as soon as the gunboats could be gotten ready to reply to this unexpected assault they opened fire upon the little fort and spedily drove its garrison out. The Koreans supposed these gunboats were approaching for the purpose of assault. Indeed, as no intimation had been given the Korean govern-

ment that such a reconnoitering expedition was planned, and as this narrow passage was considered the main gateway of approach to the capital, the Koreans argued strictly from the book and the American contention that the attack was unprovoked was groundless, for to Korean eyes the very approach to this stronghold was abundant provocation.

When the fort had been silenced, the two gunboats steamed back to the main anchorage and reported. It was instantly decided that an apology must be forthcoming from the government, but as none came, retaliation was the only thing left to vindicate the wounded honor of the United States. A strong force was despatched, which, under cover of the ship's guns was landed near the fort, and after a hard hand to hand struggle in which every man of the garrison was killed at his post the place was taken. Thus was the tarnished honor of the Great Republic restored to its former brightness. But mark the sequel. The Admiral plainly was entirely unequal to the task of pushing the matter to the gates of Seoul, and so he withdrew and sailed away to China exactly as the French had done. The great mistake in this lay in ignorance of the Korean character. The government cared little for the loss of a few earth-works on Kang-wha. In fact, even if the Americans had overrun and ravaged half the peninsula and yet had not unseated the king in his capital or endangered his person, their departure would have left the Koreans in the firm belief that the foreigners had been whipped. In the last decade of the twelfth century the Japanese overran the country, forced the King to flee to the very banks of the Yalu, killed hundreds of thousands of the people and for seven years waged equal war in the peninsula, and yet when Hideyoshi died and his troops were recalled Korea claimed that the Japanese had been defeated; and it was true. The approach of United States gunboats up to the very walls of the "Gibraltar" of Korea was nothing less than a declaration of war, and the paltry loss of the little garrison was a cheap price to pay for their ultimate triumph in seeing the American ships "hull down" in the Yellow sea.

When this glad news was published in Seoul the already plethoric pride of the Regent swelled to bursting. Another brilliant victory had been scored.